DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 236 339 CE 037 375

TITLE	Self-Help and Community Education. Courier No. 28.
INSTITUTION	Asian - South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education.
PUB DATE	Jul 83
NOTE	61p.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
JOURNAL CIT	ASPBAE Courier; n28 Jul 1983
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adult Education; Case Studies; *Community Education; Community Services; Continuing Education; *Economic Development; Educational Finance; Educational Policy; *Educational Practices; *Individual Development; Nonformal Education; Nontraditional Education; Open Universities; Postsecondary Education; Private Agencies; Program Costs; Program Development; Program Implementation; School Role; Self Actualization; *Self Help Programs; Unions
IDENTIFIERS	Allama Iqbal Open University (Pakistan); Asia; Bangladesh; China; India; Pakistan; South Pacific

ABSTRACT

This journal consists of eight articles dealing with self-help and community education. Included in the volume are the following articles: "An Uphill Struggle--Self-Help in Bangladesh," by S. Harrison and Judy Saul; "How Not to Help a Local Community: A Case from South India," by Nora Sammut and Maria Theresa; "The High Cost of Manipulating Nongovernmental Organizations," a CENDHRRA Development Memo; "Policies for Adult Education in China," by the International Council for Adult Education Team III; "Trade Unions and Community Service," by Dr. S. C. Dutta; "Adult Education and Development," edited by Dr. Geoff Caldwell; "Allama Iqbal Open University," by Dr. Ahmed Mohuiddin; and "Conceptual Basis of Nonformal Education," by Felicita G. Bernardino and Marcos S. Ramos. (MN)

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ASIAN SOUTH PACIFIC BUREAU OF ADULT EDUCATION

SELF-HELP AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

COURIER NO. 28

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ASPBAE is associated with the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE)

Produced at the Centre for Continuing Education, Australian National University, Canberra

ASPBAE COURIER SERVICE is produced three times a year in April, July and December.

Opinions expressed in the Courier are not necessarily those of the Editorial Board or Members of the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education.

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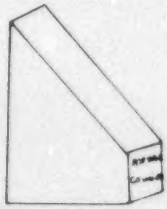
The ASPBAE Courier began in 1974, jointly edited by Arch Nelson and Joan Allsop. It was produced twice yearly in a book format and contained articles and news of interest to ASPBAE members. At that time the distribution was around 250 per issue. In December 1976 it was decided to change the format to the one in use at present. It was felt then that a package of information should be prepared, some of which would be of continuing interest and some of a 'news' type. Initially the Journal Section (containing articles and papers) was produced twice a year alternating with two other issues containing only the coloured looseleaf sections. [These Sections are: News (Blue): Resources (Green); and Learning Exchange (Yellow).] In 1980 it was decided to reduce the number of issues per year to 3 and have a Journal Section in each issue. The Courier has a simple, relatively inexpensive format, which can be produced quickly and easily without delays for typesetting etc. Distribution is now around 1,500 per issue and increasing steadily.

The whole package is enclosed in an envelope-cover with a distinctive map on the front showing the countries of ASPBAE. Problems have been encountered in obtaining a suitable covering envelope but we hope with this current issue that we have at least improved the situation.

The Journal and Resources Sections are expected to be of continuing interest and it is suggested that these be retained, to build up a collection of material which will have relevance over a long period. We keep copies of the Courier in pamphlet boxes. These are made from plain cardboard and are relatively cheap to buy. I don't know if they are available in other countries but would expect them to be a fairly standard item. They are useful for holding publications which do not readily stand by themselves. The Resources Section (Green) could be kept in a binder as it does not usually comprise more than 8 - 12 pages per issue. News and Learning Exchanges can be discarded after use in most cases as they contain more ephemeral material.

We have received some feedback about the Courier - most of it positive - indicating that it is distinctive, easy to read and serves the purpose for which it is intended. However, some people feel that a book format would be easier to handle and such a format would discourage people from throwing away the whole package because it is difficult to 'shelve'.

The Editorial Board met to discuss this and other matters recently and decided - at least for the time being - to continue with the present package. However, we would welcome readers views and any suggestions for improvements.



A continuing problem that we face is obtaining original articles and illustrations relevant to Asia and the Pacific. We would appreciate receiving articles, illustrations or photographs from you.

(Yvonne Heslop)

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Cover Photo: Nepalese Village, FAO Photo By D. Mason

AN UPHILL STRUGGLE

- SELF-HELP IN BANGLADESH

S. Harrison and Judy Saul

However simple and logical it may appear on paper, the organization of self-help in a developing country can be a complicated and daunting task. The story of the People's Health Centre at Savar, Bangladesh, is to some extent one of an uphill struggle against apathy and ignorance and sometimes active opposition. At the same time, it is also a heartening story of positive and continuing achievement and an example that could well be followed by health and development workers in other countries.

Now in its ninth year, Gonoshasthaya Kendra - the People's Health Centre at Savar, Bangladesh - has from the outset been a pioneering exponent of the principle of community self-help.[1] It came into being with the birth of Bangladesh, and its development cannot be separated from the life struggle of the country itself. Rejecting the centralized, urban-based, health care system with its expensive building complexes and emphasis on specialized training and academic qualifications, it concentrates on those most in need, namely the rural population of often landless, unemployed villagers living below subsistence level. And it does so by using local labour resources, training the villagers themselves in the practical skills that will help them to help themselves. The staff thus trained, draw from the people themselves, having no academic background apart from a few years' schooling, and learning on the job, are taught the basic skills of health care from preventive medicine, hygiene, and family planning to simple surgery such as the performance of abortions. These trained paramedics are then sent back to their villages to provide help locally and, in turn, to train other villagers in the skills they have learnt at the Centre.

Gonoshasthaya Kendra is a voluntary organization dedicated to the promotion of rural health and community development and registered as a charitable trust. Its programmes are financed by trust resources, local donations, and an insurance scheme in which the contributions are graded according to the economic situation of the patient. Several voluntary agencies, from

From World health forum, 2 (3): 350-357 (1981)

other countries - such as Oxfam, Novib, Terre des Hommes, Christian Aid, and War on Want - contribute to specific aspects of the work.

The programme developed by the Centre ranges from primary health care to the creation of agricultural cooperatives and is far less costly than one wholly dependent on government or international aid, since the latter type usually has to be implemented through existing social and political structures, which often means that the landowners divert the aid to their own profit. Moreover, international aid tends to be based on the assessments and ideas of the aiding countries, providing, for instance, capital-intensive rather than labour-intensive equipment in areas where unemployment is at the root of many health problems.

The achievements of the Centre cannot be measured simply in terms of the success or failure of any particular venture. It operates in an environment in which the basic conditions for health - adequate nutrition, plentiful unpolluted water, and proper sanitation - are not readily available, but have to be created, and in which the traditional social structures militate against those who attempt to provide these conditions on a wide and equitable basis. For example, those providing the land for a tubewell will see to it that the well is used mainly for their own families (though they may baulk at undertaking any repairs). Similarly, they will site the well where it is most convenient for themselves, leaving the village population without easy access to the water ostensibly provided for them. It is thus not surprising that the methods used to deal with those opposing the Centre's work may be rough and ready, consistent with its pragmatic approach to the work itself, and that disputes that arise are sometimes settled with fists rather than speeches.

Clearly, in such conditions, a health programme cannot be neatly delineated in purely medical or scientific terms for it must take into account every aspect of the life of the community, from the ailments attendant on farming (the most widespread occupation) to the role of the village women, which must be redefined so that their skills may be put at the service of the community without prejudice. The value of the Centre will be measured by the extent to which its work spreads at grass-roots level, by the number of people it can involve, and by its success in dealing with the diseases prevalent in rural Bangladesh.

The Subcentres

Judging by these criteria, the Centre has made considerable progress. Not only has its intensive health programme been brought to more villagers through the creation of subcentres, like that at Mirerchangaon, and of a "daughter" project, duplicating the Savar Centre as far as possible, in the form

of Bhatsala Centre in the village of Shampuri, but the introduction of village-based health workers has proved to be an important development. These paramedical helpers work from their own homes, reporting back either to the Centre or a subcentre. Although this is a logical extension of the self-help programme, it has involved certain difficulties. The Savar Centre itself, with its growing prestige and its community life, holds an undoubted attraction, and the auxiliary medical staff working away from it, in the villages, have lacked some of the enthusiasm and interest that its stimulating life-style and challenges arouse among those more closely associated with it. But, after perhaps a year in the villages, workers usually find increasing satisfaction both in health care and educational and agricultural work in the communities they serve.

The four subcentres, staffed by a total of 22 health workers, are continually increasing their coverage in terms of both area and population. They aim at involving the villagers themselves in the work, as well as providing health services in the form of a preventive programme (including health and nutrition education) and inpatient facilities in the form of two beds at each subcentre for emergency patients and those undergoing minor surgery. Their work is, however, often complicated or thwarted by the existing social structure and traditions. In accordance with the principle of self-help, the people of the area in which a subcentre is to be built are expected to provide the land; the donors are usually rich farmers who often attempt to exert an undue influence on the staffing and running of the subcentres. In one instance, the donor wanted to sell earth from his highland property for the mud buildings accommodating the clinic and the staff quarters, although earth for the purpose was already being offered free of charge by others. Community service with all it implies is not yet an idea that has won general acceptance, beyond lip service, and both poor and rich will have to serve a hard apprenticeship before it is fully and cheerfully implemented.

Preventive Programme

The preventive medicine service provides free vaccination for all. This may involve far more difficulties for the staff than might at first appear likely. Not all subcentres have facilities for vaccine storage, and some vaccines may have to be kept in the refrigerators at nearby government agricultural centres. In some cases, a worker may have to cycle almost 30 km to the main Centre to collect the vaccine and the same distance to return it at the end of his day's work. Another enemy with which the vaccination programme has to contend is, paradoxically, the high regard in which the Centre's paramedical training is held in the country as a whole, the result being that trained staff are often tempted by job offers from government or private organizations.

In spite of these problems, the preventive programme is making progress, special attention being given to those most at risk. Some paramedics have achieved a vaccination coverage of 70% against tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus. Tetanus immunization for women of child-bearing age is considered particularly important, although, for reasons as yet unexplained, the vaccine has not been effective in all cases, and three deaths of immunized women from tetanus in one survey area have discouraged both health staff and villagers. Indeed, many village women are convinced that the vaccine is another kind of contraceptive injection like Depo-Provera, and they are refusing it. If already pregnant, they believe that the injection is intended to kill the fetus.

The care of pregnant women, postnatal care, and family planning must occupy a major place in the health programme of a rural community in a developing and overpopulated country. Here, too, the experience of the People's Health Centre illustrates both the advantages and the problems of in-the-field pragmatic medical care. The Centre began by using medroxyprogesterone acetate in family planning, but after a carefully monitored experimental period its use became suspect because of various undesirable effects consistent with those noted in the British medical journal in connexion with this drug.[2] The Government has decided on a national programme based on the use of medroxyprogesterone; the Centre, in closer touch with the women who have actually received the substance, has decided to stop its use. However, it is not certain whether the Centre's decision is the best in the circumstances, since Bangladeshi women have, on the whole, preferred the risks of medroxyprogesterone to the disadvantages of the pill and the difficulties of intrauterine devices. For the health workers at the Centre and in the villages, who are in close contact with the women concerned, it is obviously not possible to employ the kind of impersonal calculation of risks that is acceptable in government offices.

Nor is it always easy for the Centre to help where the need is greatest, although this is certainly one of its basic aims. Its health insurance scheme is gradually expanding. This scheme divides the population into three groups - those who cannot afford two meals a day throughout the year, those who have up to 2 hectares of land, and those with over 2 hectares. Members of the first group receive a free registration card and pay 50 paisa (about US$ 0.03) per patient visit, which charge includes pathology, operations, and radiology. Members of the second group pay 12 taka for the registration card, 10 taka for annual renewal, and 2 taka per patient visit. They pay the subsidized cost of other services. Members of the third group pay the same for the registration card and its annual renewal but 5 taka per patient visit. They also pay more for other services than do members of the second group. While the poorest - and thus most vulnerable - group of insurance-card holders would certainly be given every priority in the Centre's

outpatient clinics, they are not foremost in taking advantage of its services since the journey to the Centre takes up too much of their precious working time. However, they account for about a third of sick-room admissions, which suggests that they do not come for treatment until they are too sick to work. No amount of theorizing about prevention and treatment can overcome this practical problem, which once again illustrates the need to tackle health and economic problems together.

Water and Sanitation

Water is the first and foremost preoccupation of any health care programme in a developing country - not only drinking-water, the prime need of life, but water for irrigation and for cleaning. In Bangladesh, drinking-water is generally derived from wells, tanks and rivers, and these are frequently contaminated.

Clean drinking-water, as well as water for irrigation to increase fruit and vegetable production, is being provided through the hand-pump tubewell programme. In liaison with the Government, UNICEF has donated wells of this type to many villages, but their benefits have often been confined to the few, especially when they have been sited on the land of the rich. Even when they are more widely accessible, they are often out of order because no adequate provision has been made for their maintenance.

The Centre's programme aims at providing one tubewell for every 15-25 families without private or government tubewells on their land. While the wells are provided by UNICEF, the families that are to use them must cover the digging and platform expenses of up to 500 taka. Each family also takes its share of responsibility for the maintenance of the well by depositing 100 taka at a bank or in the Post Office. This is a practical way of securing equal rights over the water supply, which is now the responsibility of the community and not just of one influential family. The Centre also supplies the members of each tubewell cooperative with a wrench and some training in carrying out minor repairs. The funds deposited by the community are used to pay for any spare parts that might be needed. It has thus been possible to ensure that no tube-well may remain out of order for longer than 48 hours, except when resinking is necessary.

Another basic health hazard to be overcome is inadequate sanitation. The Centre has been experimenting with different types of latrine to see which type would be best in the village environment with which it is dealing. Both the pit and water-seal types have serious drawbacks. The pit must be dug to a proper depth, otherwise it becomes a breeding-ground for fly-borne diseases. The water-seal type needs adequate water for flushing; in most cases, the water has to be carried for a considerable distance and, though external aid programmes have promoted the use of this type of latrine in Bangladesh, it is hardly the most suitable one. The village people, who are not usually consulted by the Government or other agencies about their wishes, make their feelings known in their own way, and it is not uncommon to find the goose-necks of water-seal latrines intentionally broken, or at least left unrepaired. People do not like to carry water for long distances. It is easier to use the water-seal latrine without the goose-neck, and the resulting smell is considered preferable to the chore of fetching water. In fact, it has been shown that there is a significant connexion between the incidence of broken goose-necks and the distance of the latrine from the water source. Thus, latrines not more than 10 metres away from the source seem to have suffered very little damage. The villagers have thus made it clear that an aid programme can not really work efficiently if they do not participate in it; after all, they are in the best position to see the practical advantages and drawbacks of the facilities supplied.

The Centre has been trying out a type of latrine - originally from Viet Nam - that makes use of human excreta to produce fertilizer. This is done by adding ash and leaves to the waste matter in the box. Two of the eight latrines tested have yielded satisfactory manure for growing vegetables, but the waste matter must be kept completely dry or the box becomes a breeding-place for maggots and flies. It takes considerable health education for the people using the latrines to understand the principles involved and to abandon their traditional habit of washing directly above the latrine after defacation. However, a modified model that has been introduced in China may prove suitable for use in the villages of Bangladesh. The Centre is planning to try this model out in villages where it has established cooperatives, but the main problem remains that of ensuring truly hygienic conditions.

Training Programme

Training at all levels and in all areas is an integral part of the Centre's mission. It must train the poorest, the most illiterate, those in greatest need of help, both to help themselves and to reject the customs and prejudices that have hindered development. The training programme must, however, also involve highly qualified physicians, graduates whose training is oriented mainly towards practice in urban industrial cultures and may not be relevant in the environment where they have to work.

Practical training in field work is provided at both Savar and the "daughter" centre at Bhatsala. In August 1978, 10 women came to Savar and 10 to Bhatsala for a months' training as cooperative health workers under the Government's Integrated

Rural Development Programme (IRDP). They learnt to deal with the health problems they would meet in their villages in a course that emphasized maternal and child health and the treatment of the four ailments most prevalent in the villages: worms, scabies, diarrhoea, and fever. They then returned to their villages for five months to apply their new skills. During this time, their work was evaluated by teams from the Centre. The aim of the evaluation was to see how much of their training the women had retained and also what special problems they encountered in their own villages and how they could be taught to deal with them. Although more than half of the women were illiterate, it was found that they had retained 80% of what they had been taught.

After the five months the women returned to the Centre for a further month's training, revising what they had learnt before and learning to treat two further common ailments. They then went back to their villages for another five months, following which there was a final month of additional training in various subcentres, where they learned vaccination techniques and the treatment of two more ailments they would be likely to encounter.

The trainees were aged between 17 and 50, and most of them were married, with children. In their enthusiasm for the training programme, they even overcame their social inhibitions sufficiently to learn how to ride a bicycle. As usual, however, the programme was not without its difficulties. The IRDP supervisors, for example, were reluctant to go into the field, and one week's briefing on the entire women's training programme was not enough to give them an understanding of the problems faced by the trainees, which resulted mainly from the conflict between traditional views about women and their work and responsibilities on returning to their villages. Village elders did not always take kindly to independent females who did not even wear their saris over their heads or behave with due deference. Because she had been deserted by her husband and was doing family planning work, one trainee was even stigmatized as a "loose woman", and it took an official investigation to clear her of the charge.

At the other end of the scale, a field programme brought medical students from three colleges to the villages to gain first-hand knowledge of health problems there and of the people among whom they would ultimately work. At first, the Ministry of Health did not allow women students to take part in this training programme, ostensibly for fear that the realities of village life might be too harsh for them. At the insistence of the Centre, however, women are now included in the 10-day course (brief, but at least a start).

The students tour the villages in the mornings and spend the afternoons discussing what they have seen there and the treatment of the ailments most commonly encountered. Most of those who have taken the course feel that their formal training did not properly equip them to deal with the diseases of the rural poor, and many of them have now established study circles in their own colleges to discuss the problem. At the same time, their college teachers have complained that they are now asking too many questions. Even some of the students felt at the outset that an attempt was being made to "brainwash" them. This perhaps reflects the natural conflict between tradition and change, and the "brainwashing" was in fact no more than a realistic exposure to the health problems of their country.

A field programme for postgraduate doctors, leading to a Diploma in Community Medicine, is being conducted at the Centre by the National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine. This programme has not yet achieved all it might have done, although the participants have found the course useful and in most cases have managed to adjust to the life-style of the Centre and gain some personal experience of the situation in the villages. It is felt, however, that the course will not really achieve its potential until more satisfactory arrangements are made for the teaching doctor.

Women's Vocational Training

To fight poverty and hunger is to strike a blow against sickness, and this is why the Centre has extended its health-care programme to include work on the land and in the crafts. In its various cooperative experiments in vocational training, women have proved no less capable than men, thus vindicating the Centre's stand for the emancipation of women. The projects include a people's workshop for metal-working, which has succeeded in securing contracts to supply construction items for nearby military and atomic establishments. It also produces hospital and other equipment at competitive rates: beds, simple operation tables, chairs, window frames, steel racks, and a number of agricultural implements. In keeping with its basic policy, the Centre aims at taking these industries into the villages, but the workers will have to acquire a very high degree of skill before their products can compete on the open market. In any case, the expansion of industry into the rural areas must await government decisions and support. In the meantime, other activities have been introduced, including woodwork, jute work, and - on the initiative of a village woman - bamboo work.

In other ventures, the Centre has made headway against difficulties that have been due, for the most part, to the upsetting of deep-rooted customs and interests. The shoe factory, started through the People's Health Centre in 1978 as a cooperative of skilled workers and financed by Oxfam, has suffered from the insistence on certain standards. Thus some resentment was occasioned by the prohibition of the practice of

giving false receipts in order to evade taxation and by the decision to produce inexpensive sandals for the poorer country folk instead of expensive shoes for rich city-dwellers. In addition, after agreeing to train villagers, including women, in shoe-making so that they might join the cooperative, the skilled craftsmen found it difficult to overcome their prejudice against accepting girls as workers on equal terms. Eventually all these obstacles proved too discouraging: three of the original five shoemakers left to find more profitable work elsewhere, while a fourth, who was a co-signatory of the cooperative's bank account, slipped away one night with far more than his share of the funds.

People's Farm

A farm project has been set up to increase understanding of the relationship between the landowner and the farmer and to try to transform that relationship. It also aims to develop new ideas for improving production and new labour techniques. Participation by all staff of the Centre is mandatory.

The project cultivates high-yield rice, vegetables, and nursery seedlings and has three ponds for fish cultivation. The seedlings are sold to local farmers to try to promote reforestation and reverse the process by which a once-green Bangladesh is rapidly becoming barren. The fish ponds are experimental. If success is achieved with the raising of certain species, an attempt will be made to introduce them into paddy fields as a "third crop".

For the cultivation of high-yield rice a good deal of fertilizer is required, which raises the problem of chemical versus organic methods. The former are more efficient but cause pollution; the latter improve the soil and make use of waste but present composting problems that are almost impossible for villagers to solve. The farm project is therefore experimenting with organic fertilization in the hope of finding more practicable methods. The yield of rice using only natural composting was 4.3 tonnes per hectare, which compared favourably with the 4.6 tonnes obtained with chemical fertilizer. Much more labour is needed to spread the bulkier natural fertilizer, and when this is taken into account the cost of an application is found to be 2150 taka per hectare for he organic fertilizer and 1100 taka per hectare for the chemical. However, the improvement in soil quality would make the organic method progressively cheaper, and the extra requirement for labour would help to ease the unemployment situation in Bangladesh, which affects many labourers for about six months every year.

The People's School

The people themselves often find the concept of self-help and sharing a daunting one, and it is hoped that training will produce a new generation with a clearer insight into the situation in the villages. The People's School, another extension of the Centre's programme, has started to offer community-oriented education for the children of the poorer farmers. It takes into account the problems facing both children and parents in areas where young children work and help at home, minding the babies or helping with the animals, and school attendance is accordingly poor. The children's absence from home is compensated for to some extent by giving them lunch, while those undergoing vocational training receive a small remuneration.

Loans

Where they run counter to vested interests, the Centre's programmes come up against particularly fierce opposition. This is illustrated clearly by the slow start to the loan programme intended to help the marginal farmers and share-croppers and free them from the grip of the money-lender and the rich landlord. The opponents of the scheme did everything they could to make the villagers suspicious of the Centre, and the pressure was such that at first nobody turned up to sign the loan contracts and collect the money. It was not until the following year the people began to take loans from the Centre, and it was also necessary to begin fertilizer sales in order to free the farmers from the hold of those who both lend money and deal in fertilizers.

Pharmaceuticals

An area in which the Centre fulfils a particularly urgent need is that of combating abuses and exploitation by foreign pharmaceutical companies. For this purpose, it has established its own factory, Gonoshasthaya Pharmaceuticals Ltd., which is owned by the Gonoshasthaya Kendra Charitable Trust, half of the profits being ploughed back for expansion and the other half used to support volunteer social and medical programmes in the country. This development should help put an end to the overpricing engaged in by multinational drug companies with the excuse that they are businesses after all, and to the dumping in Bangladesh of useless, sometimes dangerous, drugs. The factory building was designed and its airconditioning equipment installed entirely by Bangladeshi technicians, and the top management personnel have been recruited in Bangladesh and among Bangladeshi subjects working in developed countries. The factory will produce generic drugs of high quality at low cost and will be staffed mainly by women from the rural areas who are receiving basic training.

To promote the use of good-quality generic drugs, the Centre is also publishing a monthly bulletin giving information on such drugs, as well as on all aspects of basic health care. To help instruct the primary health care workers themselves,

the excellent book by David Werner Where there is no doctor is being translated and printed.

The Daughter Project

Lastly, a word about the "daughter" project at Bhatsala, 200 km to the north of Savar. Now in operation for three years, it has demonstrated that the People's Health Centre and its work can be duplicated, not only in Bangladesh but in other regions where similar methods of self-help and self-reliance would be fruitful. It cannot be denied that the beginnings of the Bhatsala Centre have been accompanied by internal dissension and squabbles, but a closer examination shows these to be a product of the struggle between generations that is such a common experience in periods of far-reaching change. For, through practical day-to-day help based on new attitudes, the Centre is sowing the seeds of change and demonstrating the advances that can be achieved by a people using mainly their own resources. This is bound to be a slow process and not an easy one, but ultimately it is the prerequisite for a country's development.

References

1 See *World health forum*, 1 (1,2): 179 (1980).

2 *British medical journal*, 1: 158 (1976).

HOW NOT TO HELP A LOCAL COMMUNITY *

A CASE FROM SOUTH INDIA

Nora Sammut and Maria Theresa

Ramachandra sadly recalls those days, five years ago, when he was well, healthy and strong. And then he cries, hiding his distorted face from us with a corner of his lunghi (loin cloth). Though he used to be dead tired when he came home every evening, after long hours of chopping wood in the scorching sun, he used to summon up what little energy was left in him to build the small one-room house that he is now living in with his wife Cinnamma and his 12-year old daughter Madhav. Finally the small house had been finished and, not having enough money to buy timber for the roof-frame, he used bamboo instead. He slowly points to the wooden door and window frames. His wife explains to us that he is trying to tell us that he had made them himself - but that he had been unable to finish the job properly because of the brain fever that so suddenly paralyzed half his body.

Today, Ramachandra is a sad, frustrated, paralyzed and dumb man. He can no longer communicate his feelings - so he often cries with frustration when somebody is kind to him and he feels unable to share and express his sadness and suffering. His wife too has had her share of suffering. About seven years ago she fell into a well while drawing water and her right hand was amputated. Having no alternative means of livelihood, they now go to town three days a week to beg. Not knowing them, meeting them in the town as beggars, people judge them and criticize them, calling them lazy. Does anyone ever bother to befriend these people and care to find out the tragic miseries of their oppressive lives?

Ramachandra and Cinnamma live in a small colony of about 63 rural, migrant families - a bright, divergent group of Malayalees, Tamilian, Tulu and Telugu speaking families. Out of these 63 families, 19 are Tamilian harijans of the chamara (cobbler) caste. The majority of these families are migrants from different states bordering Karnataka who come to the city in search of better prospects and employment. Some Tamilian families remember the days when they had to slog away as agricultural labourers on rich landowners' farms without getting enough to eat and sustain their families. They recall

*From "Ideas and Action", 148/5 (1982) p.9-12.

coming to the city seeking coolie work[1]. Months of virtual starvation during the lean season in the rural interior villages literally drove them to the city in search of food and work. Many of the cobblers came to the city knowing that there is a demand for their skill. Looking back they realize that nothing has really changed except that today they are at least ensured one meal a day. The little extra money they earn they immediately spend on gambling, drinking toddy or arak (grappa) and on films: they look at these moments as the brightest part of their lives. There is no cheaper leisure activity they can joyfully indulge in. They drink often. They drink to drown their miseries and feelings of helplessness.

The majority of the families live in small huts with cowdung floors always damp and moist in the monsoon season and ever-leaking roofs. About nine families have built small janata-type houses[2] with the help of a bank loan which they have still not begun to repay. Three families have dug their own well and grow their own vegetables. They allow only a few of their neighbours to draw water from their wells. The rest of the women have to walk a long distance to draw water from a public well in a neighbouring colony. The only municipal tap in their colony has not been working for several months. None of the families have obtained a patta (title-deed) for their homesite. The municipality has been promising it to them for many months. Without it they cannot apply for a ration card.

The men are mostly coolie workers and cobblers. Their daily income, ranging from 7 to 15 rupees a day, fluctuates depending on the availability of work.[3] The 19 cobblers work on the pavements of the city. They have to spend two rupees to go there and return home by bus. Some prefer to stay back and sleep on the pavements. Raman, one of the cobblers, explains that if they all return home, their tools and boxes would be stolen. Somebody has to stay back to guard their materials. They have no wooden shed to store their materials and work comfortably, away from the heat and heavy monsoon rains.

They, their wives and children are seriously undernourished and their bodies are not resistant to infections and diseases. Some women have regular miscarriages - they are too weak and undernourished to have a normal delivery. Some of the women and children join the men in the city and sleep and live with them on the pavements. These women and children beg during the day or roam around in search of potentially useful litter lying about. Many of the children suffer from asthma, scabies or

[1] coolie: daily wage labour

[2] janata: masses, i.e. low-cost (housing)

[3] one rupee = US$ 0.10 (approx.)

worms. As many as forty of them, between 6 and 13 years, do not go to school. The nearest school is overcrowded. The municipality has not appointed the much-needed extra teachers for many years. Parents cannot afford to pay for buses, exercise-books, uniforms, school-fees, etc. They prefer to let them roam about.

The supposedly "civilized" well-to-do often complain, through the news media, about these people being a nuisance to the public. Who is the public? Who are these people if nobody considers them part of the public? Why does the municipality turn a deaf ear to their appeals and memoranda? Why is it that they are denied a decent shelter to carry out their trade when their work is so much in demand by 'the public'? Why is it that nobody informs them about the various Central and State Government schemes which are designed for their benefit?

Until some months ago, no welfare development agency had ventured to work in Shantinagar. The development agency which is now working in this area had also previously criticized the local community members for being a restless, unstable, insecure group who were always on the move. No one tried to help them analyse the causes of their insecurity, restlessness, illiteracy, dependency, submissiveness, frequent migration and poverty. People like Ramachandra, who had enough initiative and resourcefulness to build a small house, can boast of some security. The other families have only a tiny kacheha (straw) hut to return to and as such, they feel no real sense of belonging, no real community spirit and environment with which they can identify and towards which they can contribute.

A few months ago a development agency, which for some years has been involved in housing programmes for the poor, decided to extend its services to this community. From the very beginning no attempt was made to involve the local people in the planning and decision-making process. Three families were chosen at random as the first beneficiaries. The decision was not based on any criteria such as family income, type of existing structure, number of years of settlement, number of dependants, etc. The other families immediately reacted to this arbitrary choice, expressing their feelings to the community workers. We pointed this out to the agency staff, emphasizing the fact that this approach would inevitably create unnecessary conflicts and division within the community before the actual programme was set in motion. The outcome would be totally against the principles of community development which stive to facilitate and develop the community's cooperative participation, action and self-reliance.

In an apparent attempt to involve the local people in the implementation of the housing project, the programme director decided to have a meeting with the residents. He asked them to decide on the best procedure to select the first few families

to be helped from among them. In this way the agency hoped to encourage the confidence of the people and promote their self-reliance through active involvement, effort and constructive action. The people immediately responded by deciding that drawing lots was the best way of choosing the first three family beneficiaries. They felt that this procedure would not create any conflicts or discrimination among themselves. They also felt very proud and pleased that they were consulted to give suggestions as to how best to proceed to choose the beneficiaries. Lots were drawn and one family was chosen to be helped to start a model house.

After one week, without any prior consultation or discussions, the programme staff informed the local people that instead of helping three families at a time, all the families living in a hut would be given 2,500 rupees in the form of building materials, towards the construction of a house. Work was hurriedly started so as to finish all 43 houses in the shortest time possible. This sudden change in approach was not good for the people's confidence in themselves as human beings and their self-reliance. In fact, the agency was more interested in achieving quick, visible results and making immediate use of the available foreign funds, than patiently strengthening and supporting the slow but sound process of people's development through constructive participation and involvement in the programme work.

The people were just considered as passive recipients of foreign-aid money; as weak, submissive creatures who should suppress their feelings, opinions, doubts. They were not allowed to express the hundreds of questions of this intruding external force. Even when the programme director one day appeared on the scene with a photographer who was asked to photograph the children, women, men and huts from every angle, he did not even bother to explain about the reason for taking the pictures or about their destination. The people looked at him in awe and felt afraid to ask. One of the coolie workers, Perman, later told us, while we were sitting in his hut sipping a hot cup of tea. "What a shame! What a shame! I suppose they will send these photographs to the foreigners who will see us and our huts and then send money. What a shame! And it is educated people who are doing this!" We stared at him ashamed. Ashamed of the hurt that is imposed from highly educated people on these sensitive human beings. Ashamed of all the injustice that is done to these people in the name of development.

Today, persons like Ramachandra and Cinnamma are in a dilemma. "Why did these agency people really come to help us?", they ask us. "What right do they have to choose whom to help or not?". "Why do they impose their conditions on us?". "Why is a sum of 2,500 rupees being given to hut dwellers only?". "We have struggled against all odds to put up a small room and we are as poor as ever before. We are unable to earn because of our physical hardships. We receive no pension. If the agency were

to give us money we could use it to change the bamboo sticks which are holding the roof in place and which will soon crash on us." Ramachandra and Cinnamma say that all those families who were not included in the housing programme are feeling resentful and jealous of their neighbours. They feel that the anger of many families is slowly bubbling and foresee a community conflict brewing. But by that time the project will be over and the agency staff happy with the 'development' they have brought about. While the people would be left with an internal community problem which they did not create or are even prepared to handle.

Some of Ramachandra's and Cinnamma's neighbours are already openly showing their hostility towards those families who are building a house. Krishnan, who some months ago had worked very hard along with other men from the same community to dig a community well, is very angry now. He argues that he did not go to work for three months on the well for nothing. For this he had been given food-for-work bulgur wheat and oil that he and his family were not used to and which they found difficult to digest. Now he is very angry. Angry at the agency that first encouraged him to work for his community and which is now doing him an injustice. He had contributed his physical labour happily because it was going to benefit all. Now the same people had come in and were giving assistance only to a few, and not to him because he had a house which he had built on a bank loan. Krishnan feels that he could use the money to repay the bank loan he took several years ago and which he has never managed to repay. He feels discriminated against, left out.

Many others feel like him. But the agency staff do not know this. They are too busy finishing projects and meeting deadlines, to meet and listen to people.

Soon the housing programme will be over. The foreign-aid money has to be spent by a stipulated date. The agency will then shift its attention to another 'undeveloped' area. By that time Shantinagar is expected to be a 'developed' colony with pukka (brick) houses and a semi-pukka well. By that time the people will probably have a patta, and electricity.

What else do they need?!

THE HIGH COST OF MANIPULATING NGOs

CENDHRRA Development Memo No.16
January 1983

Asian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are increasingly vulnerable to the manipulations - sometimes crudely contrived, often subtly imposed - coming from established institutions on whom they are made to depend. These manipulative schemes result in an immense expenditure of time and resources on the part of NGOs who are reduced to becoming the "water carriers" for development's elite corps.

The manipulator has arrived on the Asian development scene under various guises but his techniques follow a uniform pattern: others do the dirty work for which he gets the credit - others must diminish while he must increase. Some concrete examples:

A consortium of business firms in an Asian country has established a secretariate to manage its pooled contributions for social development projects. The original charter forbids the secretariate to operate its own projects. However, probably bored with office tasks, the staff gradually ambitious to have its own "model" project. An NGO is promised funding - if it surrenders the training of its field workers to the secretariate; if it surrenders the choice of supervisors to the secretariate; If it surrenders the planning of field projects to the secretariate. With its autonomy lost to a predatory group, the rural NGO collapses. The secretariate finally has its very own project to play with. It becomes the much publicized social development showcase of the business world. It provides data for several papers read in international meetings and becomes the stepping stone for the promotion of secretariate staff to U.N. positions. Ironically, today the project has been abandoned. Reason? Too much funding has rendered it unreplicable.

The next example of the manipulator's presence: a prestigious Asian-based educational institution seeks more funds to support its Western-educated professors accustomed to Western-scaled salaries and comforts. It hears through its old-boys' grapevine that there is money available in rural-related development education. Overnight, professors are mobilized to produce curricula on managerial strategies to cope with rural development problems. To launch this programme for "barefoot managers", case studies are needed. Since most of the professors have not seen a rice field in years nor plan to enter a farmer's hut, a seminar was designed to entice rural NGOs to the city. After extracting over a weekend the knowledge farmers have acquired through long years of hardship, the institution's faculty of Ph.D. scholars then shares their bountiful research grant with the rural visitors by inviting them to a free meal. Today, prominently stacked in the institute's library shelves is a series of case studies on rural development that would do Harvard University proud.

Our third example is fast becoming a major conduit for burdening NGOs with time-consuming tasks on trivialities. There must be a prolific gnome somewhere in the warrens of international inter-governmental institutions whose main task is to locate funds for seminars to be managed by retired university professors or government officials. These consultants travel all over Asia demanding extensive reports from NGOs which they then put together and publish under their authorship. Their schedules disrupt the priority work of NGOs since local meetings must be quickly organized and reports be hastily published. The campus syndrome which impels professors to publish or professionally perish seems to have penetrated international organizations whose savants exhibit a compulsion to travel and organize multinational meetings here and there, or face the loss of a plum promotion to Rome or New York.

Third World NGOs are vulnerable victims of marauding manipulators. The need for funds and international links could tempt NGOs to submit to the unreasonable demands of those who need rural information and experiences to build up their personal prestige. The remaining years of this decade do not seem to call for yet another prolific display of world conferences, international seminars, exhibits, workshops ... One is almost tempted to plead for a moratorium on grandiose meetings and on the jet travels of ivory-tower experts. Let those plane tickets be converted instead to bus tickets that enable more farmers to visit the rural projects of neighboring farmers. Let those expensive meetings give way instead to more village dialogues held beside bamboo-lined paths. Let the feverish schedules and deadlines designed to match the needs and tempo of uprooted experts give way to the quiet, patient, steady rhythm of small NGOs working alongside their village partners.

It is from these organic, incremental activites - hidden from the glare of premature exposures and boastful disclosures - that the creative ideas, viable processes and tested alternatives will emerge to signal the advent of more authentic efforts to solve poverty as we enter the final development decade of the twentieth century. (A.L. Ledesma)

POLICIES FOR ADULT EDUCATION IN CHINA

ICAE Team III

Three teams of adult educators have visited the People's Republic of China on behalf of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). The teams have been working towards an exchange of learning and experience between China and other parts of the world. Team III visited China in March 1983. The members of the team were: Dr Chris Duke, Ms Lea Cousineau, Mr David Walker, and Mr Charles Wong. Below is an extract from their report to ICAE - this section deals with policies for adult education in China.

Since the last ICAE Mission to China in 1981 the Worker-Peasant Education Bureau has become the Department of Adult Education. Director Cui Yi was appointed late in 1982 and already clearly has a considerable grasp of, as well as energy for, the work of the Department. The change of designation seems pragmatically to express the importance of continuing the education, and upgrading the level, of workers of all kinds, managerial and operative, rural and urban. Literacy remains a responsibility but it is of less importance than general, scientific, technical and management education of many kinds. Although the present emphasis is on the industrial and urban sector, the importance of strengthening rural and agricultural education was mentioned a number of times.

All the evidence available to the mission suggested that adult education is strongly anchored in government development policy, has strong top-level support, is vigorously led from the centre, and seeks both to sustain central direction and foster provincial and more local effort and initiative. The level of those with whom the mission met suggests also that international cooperation to develop education is perceived as an important element, even while self-reliance is valued and efforts to strengthen adult education for development will continue with or without such external stimulation. The efforts to create the infrastructure and structure of a national system of provision, duly formalised and recognised for accreditation and employment purposes, and to expand the sheer scale of provision (as studied by an ICAE team in August-September 1981 and described in its mission report) have been largely successful, allowing that even in China there may always be some status differential compared with credentials through the regular secondary and higher education system. There remains a healthy recognition of the unique strength of adult education, which connects learning with actual needs and circumstances of production more closely than does regular school and tertiary education, and a commitment not to sacrifice this to the quest for formal (more academic but less functional) status.

Pressure on those responsible for adult education derives from

a) China's urgency to modernise

b) the 'double generation' phenomenon of those who missed adequate education during the Cultural Revolution as well as those requiring regular and updating education in the normal course of events

c) the shortfall and higher cost of places in the regular education system

Even though basic 'making up' education is well under way for the Cultural Revolution generation in many places, the demand remains immense. Meanwhile facilities and equipment are scarce and inadequate. Many teachers in adult education are part-time specialists from industry, and even the full-time education teachers and administrators lack training in adult education and teaching methods, and access to resources to enhance their abilities and play the crucial role required of them as reference points and resources to part-time lecturers. Scarcity of teaching resources naturally places a premium on TV and other distance forms of education. Yet, in the absence of information and models for curricula and teaching methods specially suited to working adults, much adult education is traditionally instructional and places extreme demands on the commitment and staying power of the learners.

Leading Chinese adult educators are acutely aware of these problems, yet the pressure of ongoing work may make it hard to find time for strategic thinking about educational innovation and the dissemination of innovation. There may be a danger

a) of over-reliance on educational technology to solve the problems of numbers

b) of reliance on out-of-date equipment and methods, from lack of knowledge of alternatives

c) of over-assimilation to regular technical and higher education with resultant loss of contact with production needs, and consequent reduced utility.

It must also be acknowledged that cultural and other communication factors may have obscured from the ICAE mission some aspects of Chinese strategic planning which take account of these factors.

Within a general context of providing central leadership and standards, promoting provincial and local initiative, and seeking to disseminate experience and innovation through professional associations, international exchanges, periodic seminars and other means, the 'adult education centre' concept finds a sensible place. Initially three such centres have been identified for their important location in key cities (or city sectors), with subject areas both reflecting the needs of these geographical and economic sectors and with the potential to extend their influence more widely. Other centres are intended to play a similar role, as resources permit their creation and basic equipping, probably also based on existing adult education institutions, in the other main regions of China. The concept (which possibly gained in clarity from the mission's questions and discussion) embraces both the idea of a model, leading, resource and dissemination centre for the city, and perhaps, later, the province, region or country in some instances, and a 'key institution' in the sense of having certain scarce laboratory facilities on which technical students (especially at the later tertiary stages) could gain training and experience not possible in their own workers' universities. The main mode of dissemination in the immediate future is through in-service training of full-time adult education teachers (who are in turn seen as a key to guiding and assisting the large number of part-time teachers). In the longer term the centres might serve more generally as resource and R and D centres for adult education planners and administrators as well as teachers, regionally and even in some respects or specialisms nationally. It remains to be seen how far the centres could effectively be linked as nodes in a network for national innovation.

Two other functions they are already clearly intended and able to provide are

a) as entry points for overseas models, materials, methods and experience

b) as centres for developing, testing and disseminating teaching materials, such as specialised modules in the subjects represented.

The mission also learned of a longer-term intention of the Ministry of Education to create (from one to three or four) national adult education research centres to foster and direct research and enhance exchanges with adult education overseas, to publish books and journals in the field etc.

Possible locations might be Beijing, Shanghai, Dalian, Harbin. The notion of such centres, distinct from the 'model' teaching-oriented centres, clearly has attractions in terms of developing and providing a cutting edge for the national system of adult education. ICAE involvement in and support for the development of national research centres is recommended. One important question will be whether and how they can keep contact with practical needs and problems, so building on a distinctive strength of worker-peasant education in China.

There is a desire among those in Chinese adult education to acquire more exclusive use of facilities dedicated to adult education. By the standards of most countries inter-agency cooperation seems good (e.g. the use of regular higher education facilities and teachers in the workers' spare-time adult education system). The drive for separate facilities appears well judged, modest and very well founded in need.

All in all, there is a great willingness to explore and try new ideas, in planning and administration as well as in teaching, despite the predominance of instructional and drill approaches in the latter at present. It seems certain that adult education will remain one of the 'two legs' of Chinese education for the foreseeable future, that its functionality will continue to win top-level political and bureaucratic support, and that its responsibilities will continue to expand with the further widening of the moving target of scientific and technical as well as general (cultural) education and upgrading for development.

TRADE UNIONS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Dr. S.C. Dutta*

Trade unions in India are today largely concentrating their activities on improving the economic and service conditions of their members. Protecting and promoting the economic, social and political interests of the members is the traditional role of the trade unions which are largely modelled on the western pattern. While this role remains valid even today, there are many factors in the Indian situation which call for expansion and extension of this role, to bring within their orbit service to the community as an integral part of the responsibility.

The first is the economic situation and its impact on food, shelter, clothing available to the working class which in turn affects their productivity. The stage of economic development and the workers productivity sets limitation to collective bargaining.

The second is that in India the State happens to be the biggest employer and plays a much more dominant role than played by the capitalist at a comparable stage of economic development in the west. The State being the biggest employer as well as the representative of the nation and the community makes the task of collective bargaining complicated and difficult. Moreover, it casts a responsibility on the trade unions to take part in the decision-making processes of the State not only in matters concerning the industrial labour but also the entire society for promoting economic growth with social justice. With about 50% of our population living below the poverty line, organised industrial labour has to take greater initiative and play a leadership role in the decision making processes of the community and the country.

The third is that in a developing country like India the worker is not merely a productive tool of the society but a citizen of a democratic country, a member of the local community and a head of a family. These roles cast a responsibility on him which trade unions must help him to play with distinction and credit.

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* Vice-President, Indian Adult Education Association, New Delhi, founder Chairman, Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (1964-76), founder member, Central Board of Workers' Education (57-78), founder Secretary, Indian University Association for Continuing Education (65-79).

In view of the above mentioned situation in the country it has become imperative for us to consider to what extent and in what manner the trade unions must extend and expand their activities in order to become an effective instrument of development and change and to serve the role which history has cast on the working class in India.

II

The overwhelming majority of the labour force in India belong and will continue to belong for quite sometime to the rural sector. The implication of this fact is very obvious for the trade union movement in the country which have not shown much interest in the poorer non-organised sections of the population. If the trade unions continue to confine their attention only to the industrial labour they will have to content themselves to remain a minority movement and will not be able to influence the decision-making processes and changes which are a constant phenomena of the socio-economic system of this country. Therefore, the trade unions must align themselves with other people's movements like Adult Education, Cooperatives, Organisations of the Rural Labour and slum-dwellers. In order to do that the trade unions must extend their scope and bring within their orbit, service to the community as an integral part of their responsibility. Once the trade unions broaden their base and bring within their fold the rural labour and align themselves with other people's movements, the trade unions will cease to be a minority movement and will be able to influence changes to serve the purpose of the poor and the down-trodden who are being denied the fruits of development which are being cornered by the entrenched vested interests and their allies.

We must consider carefully what changes and what programmes the trade unions must undertake to meet the changing needs in developing societies. However, some indications are being given in order to initiate wide-ranging discussion on this important facet of the expanded role of trade unions. It seems obvious that the trade unions must organise educational programmes for adult men and women with a view (i) to widen their mental horizon, (ii) to enable them to understand the socio-political forces which are hampering our progress and (iii) to prepare them to combat these forces and try to establish a just social order. Another programme could be to organise the slum-dwellers and land-less labourers for improvement in their life style, so as to reap the benefit of various development programmes initiated by the state with the main objective of benefitting the poor.

III

As stated earlier, the trade unions must take into consideration

the needs and requirements of the members as reflected in the various roles that they have to play in society. The needs as head of the family are varied. The family may need from time to time some medical attention. The children may need educational facilities and the whole family may need recreational and cultural facilities. The unions will have to consider how it can help the members to seek satisfaction of all these needs. The unions may be able to initiate some projects for educational, cultural and recreational activities of the family members and the people in their localities but for satisfying many other needs of the members and their families, the unions will have to establish relations with the local community institutions servicing the area in respect of their specialised field of competence. This effort would ensure better cooperation and forge links with the community and also provide assistance to satisfy the needs and requirements of the members of the unions and their families.

Science and technology have made tremendous progress during the last quarter century. This new knowledge needs to be transferred and transmitted to the working class and their family members. This may help in solving the age old problems of privation and bring about social and economic justice.

IV

In the prevailing economic situation in the country where nearly 50% of our people live below the poverty line and where the fruits of development are being cornered by the few to the neglect of the many, it is obvious that the present administrative and socio-economic structures inherited from the colonial powers need to be changed so that the large number of the poor people, living below the poverty line could live a decent life. For this, the trade unions will have to carefully examine their role and responsibilities in the process of national development and economic modernisation and widen their scope to a broader spectrum stretching beyond wages, benefits and industrial relations. They should become an indispensible machinery to ensure success of all developmental endeavour of the nation ensuring that prosperity is shared by all and that the weaker sections are given special attention and care. This would mean the trade unions will have to actively participate in the economic development of the country by undertaking activities beneficial to the community at large. This they can do, by organising cooperative activities and venturing into employment-creation and income-generating avenues, training of the unemployed youth etc.

Trade unions could organise cooperatives for meeting the consumer needs, for credit facilities, for housing as well as for medical and health needs. Cooperatives run and controlled by their abiding values are of crucial importance to development and help

the community to solve some of their problems which they face as consumers. This will also establish alternative channels of distribution and sale of consumer goods.

Similarly starting of income-generating ventures owned and run by workers will lead to a number of benefits. The workers will gain active participation in the process of development, and will become more conscious of the importance of productivity and work discipline in the context of economic ventures where they themselves are the owners and where productivity improvements will bring them direct and obvious benefit. Finally the experience of saving investment for employment creation will have revolutionary educative value in terms of self-reliance, working class solidarity and the value of the organisational principle.

In running such an enterprise the trade unions will have to be very careful in selecting the working class youth for whom employment is being created. A youth centre could be started which will carefully select a working class youth and give him necessary training and grooming to join the work force for the workers' enterprise. The training should also include wholesome recreational activities, social service and leadership orientation to community development.

The trade union movement should consider the implications of these suggestions for this marks a significant initiative first, in the area of serving union members by reducing their dependency burden and second of serving society by reducing unemployment and speeding up industrial growth. This will also integrate the trade union movement with the youth both of working class and non-working class origin within a common institutional framework. The benefits in terms of rising social influence, cadre-building, leadership development, thus secured, will be of immense benefit to the trade union movement in India. This also means that the trade unions will have to secure the assistance of professional managers and technocrats to impart training to the unemployed youth.

V

The broad indications of the types of programmes that trade unions can undertake in view of their expanding role in India to serve the community needs to be thoroughly considered. Leadership training and education will have to be geared as a necessary component of the organisational activities which the trade unions must undertake to play their historic role to remove poverty and inequality in our otherwise unequal society where "a few have prospered on the share and subjection of the many". Education, in the broadest sense, must become an integral part of trade unions' responsibility in this last quarter of the twentieth century.

ADULT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Dr Geoff Caldwell (Editor)

THE TASKS OF ADULT EDUCATORS IN THE FUTURE

We have sketched some of the likely social developments; we have talked about Australian development and specified some of the desirable changes that would have to take place to bring about a better Australia. We have noted some of the constraints that are operating. It is now time to discuss the specific tasks to which adult educators might address themselves over the next decade - given the data collected hitherto.

a. TAFE and community development

In Australia many adult educators are heavily involved within the TAFE*sector. The first thing that should be said is that the TAFE classes being conducted contemporarily are overall being done well. However, in the 1980's TAFE courses may need to change, with greater emphasis being given to community development. In this sense, adult educators will be making a significant contribution to the development of Australian society. In collaboration with other bodies such as craft clubs and local community groups, adult educators can act as stimulators and coordinators. The role that government might play here is largely in equity terms by funding and creating opportunities for those who missed out first time around or those who blossom from the experience of some further education.

b. Individual or organisational funding and provision

Debate occasionally surfaces as to whether individuals should be funded in their educational endeavours or whether organisations should be the recipients of educational finance. The educational voucher notion has been around for a number of years, but has not attracted widespread community support. Voluntary community groups receiving educational grants are not always evaluated. If evaluation takes place, it is executed by the adult educators themselves and not by the consumers. In terms of the total adult education provision more significant consultation needs to take place with clients and potential

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Extracts from "Adult Education and Development" a report of a conference, November, 1982, of the Australian National Commission for Unesco and the Australian Association of Adult Education.

* TAFE - Technical and Further Education

clients. For instance, the Swedish model for consultation is one that might be developed here. The study circles in that country are funded by Government and not by Institutions and as many as 200,000 people are involved. These study circles lessen the need for the formal institution in the sense that the consumers determine what it is that people shall study, rather than the institution being the determiner of provision. In future adult education evaluations, the consumers should be central.

c. Adult education training

If adult education is to meet the challenge of the future, the training of adult educators should have a strong interdisciplinary component. Indeed, the training for a variety of related occupations such as adult education, community education, recreation, social work and so on are such that a core-course with subsequent specialisations to suit the particular occupational focus would be desirable. It might lead to the sharing of a common core of basic knowledge which might provide a basic link even as the professionals pursued their more specialised occupational roles.

d. The role of adult education associations

The role of adult education associations needs to be continually spotlighted. For instance, adult educators might continue to work hard in the development of a variety of networks at local, state and national levels. In other words, Adult Education Associations and their representatives should make it a priority to put people in touch with one another who have a common interest, through the up-to-date collection of relevant data on the practitioners in various branches of the adult education field. Additional roles that might be played by adult education agencies such as the Australian Association for Adult Education are the initiation of, organisation and conduct of conferences, as well as the preparation and submission of proposals for funding and assistance. Indeed the AAAE might increasingly develop as an expert agency able to offer advice to constituent adult educational organisations or adult educators seeking funds from various granting bodies.

e. Adult education and social change

Another significant task to be undertaken by adult educators is the preparation of people for dealing with the increasing rates of social change. Such a role requires that the educational planners and curriculum developers need to be aware themselves of the nature and extent of contemporary social change. Further, adult educators might profitably make people aware of the available choices especially to those who are not literate. Further, adult educators might help to inform schools about the range of choices available to people who

might wish to continue their education in later life. Early in their school lives, children should be aware that there is an educational life throughout the entire life-cycle.

Given their social concerns, it is surprising that adult educators have not entered the field of politics. Because politics is about influence and decision-making, then perhaps some in the ranks of adult education should consider catapulting themselves into the political arena.

Adult educators need to be aware that if desirable social change is contemplated then the starting point can be either with changing attitudes or changing structures. Proponents will argue for one or the other; some feel that both need to be worked at simultaneously if the desirable change is to be achieved. Indeed adult educators should help to create forums for the discussions of social issues. The columns of newspapers are simply not enough. Meetings, summit conferences, symposia, and workshops which are imaginatively and sensitively organised so that all the participants might work creatively together are the types of forums that adult educators should continue to create in the task of public education. In such discussions adult educators might assist people in identifying personal and community goals. Thus there is a strong community development component about some strands of adult education.

f. Dichotomies and dilemmas in adult education

Some adult educators feel that the primary purpose of the adult education profession is to empower adults to take actions and seek options for themselves. This adult education purpose bears some comparison with the purpose of social work which aims to give those ill-equipped to manage their own lives the necessary skills and knowledge to do so. In addition, social work purposes include the creation of a more equitable society, which is again coincident with some of the purposes of adult education.

Furthermore, in planning provision, adult educators should meet people at their level. There is no one set of knowledge and skills which can be utilised to develop a broad range of people. The content and style of the provision must be matched with the needs, desires and situation of the people who are the clients. In general terms, the basic aim underlying adult education provision is the hope that people will acquire and develop skills, and in that process build self-confidence.

What should adult educators be teaching? Those who conceptualise the divisions of adult education use such dichotomies as vocational/non-vocational; informal/non-formal; accredited/non-accredited; affective/cognitive.

Debates about whether adult educators should put their primary energies into one or the other of these sets of dichotomies often leads to fruitless, even destructive debate. It can be argued that adult educators should be in all of these fields and perhaps it is the methodology that is the distinguishing character of the adult education profession. But whatever it is the individual adult educator embarks upon in his or her execution of the adult education tasks, it is important that the individual adult educator be aware of his or her ideological bias and be sensitive to the strengths and weaknesses of the various strands of the adult education enterprise.

Part of the problem that adult education faces in defining a role for itself is that it has a 'residual' character. Because the primary, secondary and post-secondary formal systems have the highest priority for government funding, the adult education sector is rather left with the scraps - with what the formal system cannot, or will not do. In some sense then it becomes difficult for adult education to give itself a distinctive character.

g. Adult education and international links

Adult education is part of an international community of workers. Indeed adult educators should concern themselves in this critical age with the subject of peace. International links should be established with other people working in the same field. Directories and addresses of organisations concerned with adult education might be developed and the cross-fertilisation of ideas needs to be encouraged.

In terms of the mature development of the adult educator, living in another cultural milieu either within Australia or elsewhere, enriches the adult educator's perspective. In this way the adult educator gets to know people and other situations and is not blindly entombed in one socio-cultural context.

In terms of the methodology of adult education, one thing seems significant - that fluidity rather than rigidity should characterise teaching/learning roles. For example, in teaching and learning of English as a second language, the child can be seen to be the guide/teacher of the parent, as they explore and acquire the language of the host country. There is much to recommend families learning together, rather than in generationally segregated groups.

h. Collaboration and co-operation in adult education

Given the shortage of funds available to those involved in adult education competition for scarce resources is often endemic. However, the rivalry and competition that has sometimes characterised relations between the various adult education sectors needs to be replaced by a spirit of collaboration and cooperation.

i. Accessibility to information

As indicated earlier, adult educators might use their skills in order to increase people's access to information. Ready access to information increases people's capacity to be self-sufficient. Indeed adult educators might encourage the individual to take greater responsibility for his/her physical and mental health.

j. Work and adult education

Since work is central to a majority of the population, adult educators might seek to encourage conditions which produce satisfying work. Work satisfaction can be achieved by participative decision-making industrial democracy and opportunities for sport and recreation within the work place, while a great deal of learning does take place on the job, many jobs are too often characterised by grinding routine. It is time that we begin to adjust work to people rather than people to work, recognising that there are some unedifying, dull, unpleasant tasks that do have to be performed by somebody or something. March on the robots!

Perhaps the primacy which work assumes will also need to be modified. If education assumes a more significant role in the lives of adult workers, then paid educational leave and leave without pay may become more widespread. Adult educators should become advocates for the widespread use of paid educational leave and leave without pay. It is interesting to note that in addition to universities, legal and accounting firms are now offering sabbaticals to professionals as a reward for continued service.

k. Adult education and interpersonal skills learning

Many adults tend to be relatively isolated emotionally, and lack experience in emotional sharing, intimacy and being able to put themselves in other people's places etc. Within the adult education galaxy of talents and skills, there is a significant place for provision to be made in giving experiences to people aimed at increasing their interpersonal skills.

THE DISTINCTIVE COMPETENCES AND ABILITIES OF ADULT EDUCATORS

In looking at the role of adult education and development, some attention must be given to identifying whether or not adult educators have a particular set of abilities, a set of unique tasks that are reserved for that profession. Perhaps no answer can yet be given, for as the society becomes more complex so does the adult education profession. Thus the foregoing discussion may constitute the beginnings of a construction of a jig-saw out of which a clear picture will emerge. As it stands there are some clusters of pieces in the adult education jig-saw puzzle, but there are many pieces which have not yet been assembled. Nevertheless the following could be said.

1. In many senses, learning for its own sake is not the primary objective of individuals who participate in adult education. Usually there is often a desired outcome which leads to the adult education activity. For example, most adults who learn French, will do so for reasons relating to work or tourism, rather than for its intrinsic worth. As a further example, women who have been out of the work force through child bearing and child rearing, often seek to re-enter the outside world through an adult education class as a testing ground. Successful experience of such a class may lead them to re-enter the work world or undertake academic work. In this situation the desire to vary the life-style is the primary purpose and the undertaking of an adult education course is the means which the individual chooses.

2. One of the skills that adult educators may possess is an appreciation of the differences between theories of child and adult learning. The adult educator is dealing with a voluntary learner rather than children or adolescents who are compelled to attend an educational institution and are thus captive. The adult educator should be able to diagnose individual and community needs and in response, design, organise and provide activity to meet these needs.

3. In the total educational process the overwhelming emphasis is on the excellence of content and under-emphasis on the process of learning. The significant difference between the ordinary educator and the adult educator is that adult educators are more sensitive (or ought to be more sensitive) to the process or learning. For instance, adults are treated as equals more than is the case with young school students. Indeed the whole educational enterprise would benefit from a more significant appreciation of the methods adopted by adult educators who pay special attention to the adequacy of conditions under which adults learn as well as the appropriateness of learning techniques.

4. That AAAE and adult educators should make themselves aware of the significant related material emanating from OECD as well as Unesco.

5. In considering the role of adult education some attention should be given to the extent to which adult education can be a subversive activity. In countries like Australia, adult education is not, as yet, a threatening activity, though indeed it can be as in countries like Spain. But attention needs to be given as to whether adult educators might try and bring about significant social change or whether their prime purpose is through education to help individuals cope with an increasingly complex world.

ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY

Dr Ahmed Mohuiddin
Vice-Chancellor, AIOU

I. IFE PROJECTS

The Allama Iqbal Open University came into being to provide educational facilities for those who cannot benefit from formal system of education. The justification for the University lies in the fact that the formal system of education has not proved sufficient to meet the growing demands for education in Pakistan.

Limitations of Formal Education

a) Formal education is available only for a few who are better off. There are not enough schools for all. Rural poor can hardly benefit from better formal education facilities.

b) Formal education has failed to take into account the realities of our times. The schools are alienated from the main stream of work. Subject matter is not related to life. Much of the learning is never used in later life. As a result we have one of the lowest rates of literacy and at the same time there is high rate of unemployment among the educated youth.

c) It is a process of long duration and takes a considerable period of time before payoffs are reached. Formal education cannot move fast to meet the needs of the people.

d) It is costly. Schools are expensive institutions to operate. Again, due to high rate of drop-outs and repeaters, the cost is almost doubled.

Non-formal Education

a) Non-Formal Education, if properly designed and managed, can reach drop-outs, who have never been to schools and out-of-school youths.

b) It is need-oriented and deals directly with basic problems of subsistence.

c) Rewards are immediate.

d) It is less expensive.

e) Community is involved in the programme.

Programmes Offered by AIOU

Keeping in view the above pressing considerations, the Allama Iqbal Open University was established in 1974 to meet the educational needs of millions of people in the country.

AIOU offers two types of NFE programme: These are:

1. Continuing Education Programmes

   For those who cannot leave their homes and jobs to continue their education at institutions of formal education. About 60 courses are offered to about 20,000 students in a typical semester.

2. Adult Education Programmes

   For illiterates who form 74% of the total population.

Integrated Functional Education (IFE) programme is designed to produce need-based instructional materials for educating masses of people.

Integrated Functional Education Projects (IFE) AIOU

The programme was conceived and designed in February, 1975, by the Allama Iqbal Open University (then the People's Open University) in cooperation with the World Education Inc. (An American Consulting Organization specializing in functional adult education).

The Project is an illustration of the central objective of the Allama Iqbal Open University which aims at making opportunities available for life-long education to those who must continue working/earning their livilihood while they study.

The project is proposed to develop an initial approach to integrated non-formal functional education in rural Pakistan with specific objectives of providing a programme which responds to the needs and concerns of target population, modifying

learners' attitude and behaviour towards specific problems and giving learners functional ability to read with understanding and write effectively.

Specific Objectives

Specific objectives of IFE projects are:

1. To provide a programme which is responsive to the expressed needs of the rural population.
2. To increase farmers-workers productivity in agricultural/industrial sectors.
3. To provide vocational training for females to make them earning members of the family.
4. To identify women culture in Pakistan.
5. To give learners (male and female) functional ability to read with understanding and write effectively.
6. To modify learners attitude towards their work and areas of responsibilities.
7. To search common elements which may generally characterise the programme in all parts of Pakistan.
8. To examine whether such efforts as IFE, have the possibility for institutionalization/expansion or transfer.

The project was initiated in early 1976. It was first introduced in 20 rural villages in IRD Markaz, Daultala, District Rawalpindi.

The project began with a preliminary survey and collection of base-line date of the area. On the basis of the data collected, twenty villages were selected for opening IFE Centres. For the selection of the villages the following factors were kept in view:

1. Representativeness of the area.
2. Availability of nation building agencies in the area.
3. Availability of technicians/resource persons.
4. Interest of villagers in having adult education programme.
5. Relative lack of inter-group/caste differences.
6. Demographic factors.
7. Convenience for supervision.

In the selected villages needs assessment survey was carried out separately for male and female. Responding to the needs of the clientele, the programme content was specially developed and materials were designed and printed. Working teachers, preferably local and who were willing, were selected and were given training in the use of these materials. This was followed by five months class cycle.

The field coordinators did the supervision work. One field coordinator was in charge of ten centres. The female field coordinators supervised the female centres. The field coordinators visited the centres frequently, had meetings with the teachers and villagers and tried to solve their problems, if any, during the class cycle.

On the basis of the tests (pre-test, mid-term and post-test) and the monthly reports of the teachers, it was found that the programme worked well and responses were encouraging.

The programme designed consisted of three components, i.e., (a) Literacy (b) Social education, and (c) Skill training.

Skill training component was very well received though satisfactory arrangements could not be made at the male centres.

At the female centres, sewing machines and basic embroidery instruments were provided for teaching sewing and embroidery.

Arrangements were also made for teaching selective skills such as knitting, durree making, basket making and needle work. This was very much appreciated by the villagers and enrolment at the centres was very encouraging. Evaluation of the first phase showed that the programme was a success.

In the light of the experience of the first phase, the instructional material was revised and retested in the second phase at Daultala. After completing two successful phases, the Daultala project has been wound up and the material produced

under this project have been transmitted to the Government of Punjab for wide-scale adoption.

Launching of New Projects

Since this programme aims at meeting the learning needs of the target population and since the needs of different regions vary, it was felt that the programme designed in response to the needs of one region or locality may not be suitable for all parts of the country. Keeping this in view three more IFE projects have been introduced in different parts of the country. These are:

1. IFE Project, Samahni in Azad Kashmir
2. IFE Project, Bhitshah in Sind
3. IFE Project, Sarai Naurang in NWFP.

The projects were designed almost on the pattern of Daultala i.e., preliminary survey of the area, selection of representative villages, needs assessment survey, development of instructional materials, selection and training of teachers, class cycle, evaluation and feed back.

First phase of IFE projects Samahni and Bhitshan has been completed. Preparations for launching second phase are underway. The first phase of the IFE Project Sarai Naurang has just been started.

The instructional materials developed and used for the first phase have been revised in the light of experience of the first phase. The instructional materials for Samahni is in Urdu and that for Bhitshah in Sindhi, while the materials for Sarai Naurang are in Pushto.

Revised and improved materials will be retested before these are presented to the respective governments and the Literacy Commission.

Organization

AIOU at present has three such projects in different provinces/regions of the country. Two of the projects are in their second phase, while one project is in first phase. Instructional materials have been prepared in three different languages i.e., Urdu, Sindhi and Pushto for use in different provinces/regions to educate illiterate adults in their mother tongue.

1. Staff at Headquarters

Lists of Officers	Control Staff	
a) Project Director (Part-time)	1	
b) Project Coordinator	1	
c) Deputy Project Coordinators	2	
d) Research Assistant	1	
e) Support staff	3	
Field Staff		
a) Project Managers	3	(One for each project)
b) Field Coordinators	12	(Four for each project)
c) Supporting staff	9	(Three for each project)
d) Part-time teachers	120	(40 in each project with roughly half female staff)

2. Total Number of Members in Organization

A. Control Staff	8	
B. Field Staff	24	
C. Part-time	120	(Part-time teachers)
Total:	152	

3. Steps in Project Operation

- Preliminary survey
- Selection of villages
- Needs assessment survey
- Development of instructional materials

- Training of teachers
- Class cycle
- Evaluation
- Revision/improvement of instructional materials
- Printing of instructional materials
- Training of teachers
- Class cycle
- Final evaluation
- Improvement and finalization of instructional materials

Future Programmes

The University is planning to launch ten more IFE Projects in different parts of the country subject to availability of funds.

II. ADULT FUNCTIONAL LITERACY (AFL) PROJECT

AFL is the first T.V. venture for promotion of literacy in Pakistan. The programme was introduced in 1975-76 in collaboration with the World Bank Third Education Project. Basically it is a programme of 156 tele-lessons, including 63 for literacy skills which are transmitted separately for male and female population.

The project cycle is for 6 months and programmes are received at about 700 community viewing centres, throughout the country. The average class size is 40. The centres are being run by the following agencies:

1. Adult Basic Education Society
2. Adult Education Department, Government of the Punjab.
3. APWA - All Pakistan Women's Association
4. Social Welfare Department, Government of Sind.
5. Department of Education, N.W.F.P.

About 15 million adults have directly benefited from the programme. Quite a few more agencies are interested in joining the network.

Summative evaluation of the programme is underway. The Vice-Chancellor of AIOU is the Convenor of the Coordination Committee of the Project.

III. FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION PROJECTS FOR RURAL AREAS (FEPRA)

FEPRA is essentially a research project, which proposes to help develop the University's programmes in functional and rural education. It suggests a strategy for the University's development and sets out the ways in which external support could help that development.

The AIOU has a major responsibility for functional and non-formal education. But the strategies for providing effective courses for functional education through distance teaching in rural Pakistan have yet to be thoroughly tested and tried out. It is, therefore, proposed to set up FEPRA in a limited area in order to test AIOU materials and methods and to gain experience which can subsequently be applied more generally. Thus the FEPRA will provide AIOU with a tested approach on which to try out its system of functional education while at the same time bringing educational benefits to the people living in the area.

Besides field testing the sub-delivery system of distance education, FEPRA also aims at field testing available literacy materials and creating new ones under field conditions for wider use by agencies engaged in literacy programmes.

FEPRA is a major AIOU activity, funded by the Government of Pakistan and Overseas Development Authority of U.K. The Project is scheduled to be launched in September, 1982 and concluded by the end of 1985.

CONCEPTUAL BASIS OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION*

Felicita G. Bernardino
Marcos S. Ramos

Rationale for Nonformal Education

Education can no longer be viewed as a time-bound, place-bound process. What a person learns or ought to learn in a life-time can not be acquired through formal education alone. Even well developed and well financed formal school systems cannot provide all the information, skills and knowledge that an individual needs throughout life. There are many things that one learns through nonformal education which are equally, if not more, significant and more meaningful than those acquired through formal schooling. In fact, it is very possible that many of the information, skills, knowledge and attitudes acquired through contact with other people, from work, or from motivated self-study may affect a person's life more profoundly than those acquired through formal education.

The education of a person does not end on the day he graduates from school, college or university. His education, in order to be complete, should be a continuing and a permanent process that extends from the cradle to the grave, and takes place anywhere, anytime, and in many forms or ways.

In the Philippines, education is not synonymous with schooling, nor limited only to the children and the young. A great number of children, youth and adults are not able to avail themselves of the benefits of formal schooling. Thus, millions of them are out of school. Like every Filipino this important sector of the population has a right to education which must be fulfilled. This, and many more, is the main justification for the provision of nonformal education. It is the rationale for making nonformal education a necessary component of a complete educational system.

Definition

After almost half a decade of use in the Philippines, nonformal education is still a very much misunderstood and misused term. Ask a group of people what it means to them and invariably they will give different answers. There are many possible reasons for this confusion. One is the relative newness of

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* From "Nonformal Education in the Philippines" by Felicita G. Bernardino and Marcos S. Ramos 1981, Reyvil Bulakena Publishing Corporation, Philippines, p.229.

the term to most people especially those who are not in the education sector. Another reason is the complexity of the nature and scope of nonformal education. It is so broad in character, so extensive in coverage, and so diverse in content, method and clientele that to attempt to fit it under any classification or typology is almost futile. A third reason is the reluctance on the part of some people to accept change and to believe that there are alternative systems of learning that are equally, if not more, effective as the formal system.

To understand better the concept of nonformal education it may be necessary to look at it in the light of the other equally important categories or systems of learning under which most learning activities take place, e.g. informal education, formal education and nonformal education. These three categories may be defined as follows:

Informal education refers to the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment - from family and neighbors, from work and play, from the market place, the library, and the mass media. Through informal education, for example, a child acquires a substantial vocabulary at home before going to school, a daughter learns child care and cooking from helping and observing her mother, a son picks up occupational skills from his father and children and adolescents learn from their peers. As a process, informal education is relatively unorganized and unsystematic yet it unquestionably accounts for a very high proportion of all that any person accumulates in a lifetime.[1]

Formal education refers to the hierarchically-structured and chronologically graded modern education system that stretches from primary school through the university.[2]

Formal education connotes age-specific, full-time classroom attendance in a linear graded system geared to certificates, diplomas, degrees, or other formal credentials. Formal education is thus easily defined - its administration and control is lodged in a ministry of education; its costs are measurable; and its outputs are easily identified.[3]

Nonformal education is any systematically organized educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal school system to provide selected types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population especially to the out-of-school children, youth and adults.[4]

Nonformal education refers to the motley assortment of

organized and semi-organized educational activities operating outside the regular structure and routines of the formal system, aimed at serving a great variety of learning needs of different sub-groups in the population, both young and old.[5]

Harbison[6] defines nonformal education as skill and knowledge generation taking place outside the formal schooling system ... a heterogeneous conglomeration of unstandardized and seemingly unrelated activities aimed at a wide variety of goals. It is the responsibility of no single ministry; its administration and control are widely diffused throughout the private as well as the public sectors; and its costs, inputs, and outputs are not readily measurable.

Russell J. Kleis, et. al.[7] defined nonformal education as any intentional and systematic educational enterprise (usually outside of traditional schooling) in which content, media, time units, admission criteria, staff, facilities and other system components are selected and/or adapted for particular students, populations or situations in order to maximize attainment of the learning mission and minimize maintenance constraints of the system.

A cursory study and analysis of the definitions of nonformal education given above leads to the identification of some important elements which are descriptive of its nature and scope, some of which are as follows:

1. Nonformal education is a systematically organized educational activity. As the term may indicate a sense of nonformality, it is sometimes believed that nonformal education is unorganized and unsystematic. It is not so. In fact, nonformal education may be as highly organized and systematized as formal education itself. The phrase used by Harbison, "heterogeneous conglomeration of unstandardized and seemingly unrelated activities" means a combination of many different and varied activities, but does not necessarily imply that these activities are unorganized and unsystematic.

2. Nonformal education activities are carried on outside the framework of the formal schooling system. They are not a part of the regular offerings or courses required for the completion of a certificate, diploma or degree. Although sometimes they may be conducted in formal school classrooms, in most cases nonformal education activities are carried out in buildings or centres built for the purpose, or in factories and commercial enterprises, village halls, hospitals, market places, open spaces, etc.

3. Nonformal education activities provide selected types of learning aimed at serving a great variety of educational needs. They are aimed at a wide variety of goals.

4. Nonformal education is the responsibility of no single agency, and its costs, inputs, and outputs are not easily measureable.

5. The target clientele of nonformal education includes all people - children, youth and adults who may be in school or out-of-school. They may be literate, semi-literate of illiterate, who are in need of the types of education that are not normally provided by or obtained from formal schooling.

Some nonformal education programs cater to the same learning needs as the schools and in effect are substitutes for the formal school. Examples are the "second chance" program of Thailand, or the accreditation and school equivalency and the functional literacy and continuing education programs in the Philippines.

Some nonformal education programs are directed at serving needs and benefiting clientele not generally catered to by the formal school. These learning needs relate, for example, to health, nutrition, population education, and other requisites for improving family life; to developing good personal traits and positive attitudes; to increasing economic productivity, family income, and employment opportunities; and to strengthening local institutions of self-help and self-government and broadening participation in them. Most of the programs are aimed at benefiting particular sub-groups in the local population such as small farmers, craftsmen and entrepreneurs; older girls and women; infants and young children (through the education of their elders); unemployed and under-employed out-of-school youth; barangay leaders and officers and members of cooperatives, farmer societies, and local councils. Several multi-purpose programs such as community development seek to serve all members of the family and community and a broad spectrum of learning needs.

The extreme diversity of nonformal education programs, not only in their target audiences and learning objectives but also in their forms, structures, educational technologies and methods makes it difficult to fit them neatly into a refined classification system.

Characteristics of Nonformal Education

One way of arriving at a better understanding of nonformal education is to study its typical characteristics. The Seminar sponsored by the Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group (SEADAG)[8] held in Washington D.C. in May 1971 summarized the major characteristics of nonformal education as follows:

1. Nonformal education is functionally related to specific individual, social and economic development to meet specific needs of specific groups and hence distinguish itself from formal programs that tend to be more general and have universal application.

2. Specific behavioral changes are often more central to stated objectives.

3. The programs often involve learning through experience and result in the acquisition of skills and knowledge processes important for leadership.

4. Because of the situations, problems and people involved, nonformal programs often require the teacher and student to cross class, ethnic and economic lines.

5. Nonformal education is a way to reach the out-of-school population. Nonformal education should be able to meet needs that formal education cannot meet.

6. Nonformal education provides a possible avenue for social and economic mobility by providing another means for obtaining the needed "credentials" for job placement and/or advancement.

7. Nonformal education is flexible and more susceptible to innovation. Nonformal programs are usually not as tightly controlled or rigidly planned as formal programs. They seem to leave more room for the individual to try new things, to innovate.

8. Nonformal programs are near the point and time of use. They are likely to be initiated to meet specific needs, at the point of need, because they are flexible.

9. Nonformal education is often composed of short, discreet pieces of training unlike the formal program which is long and continuous.

10. Most nonformal education programs are less costly or are self-supporting in cost, or at least the cost is frequently more to the employer or those who directly benefit from them.

11. The training is more specific and hence not easily applicable to broad use. Nonformal education tends to minimize the usefulness of the training in obtaining employment in situations other than for which it was given. This characteristic tends to reduce the brain drain.

12. Because the training takes place closer to the point of use, the administration is diffused. Diffused administration requires more local planning. The programs are therefore more apt to be compatible with local traditions and culture.

13. Nonformal education provides continuity between formal school learning and the environment; programs are often an integral part of the environment.

14. Nonformal education is a way to maximize the benefits of formal education. The skills and knowledge learned in the formal education program are often incomplete or incapable of application in the form in which they are presented. Nonformal education can provide for additional learning so that the earlier contribution of the formal school can be maximized.

Another set of statements on the characteristics of nonformal education was made by Kleis, et. al., as follows:[9]

(1) It is not likely to be identified as "education"; (2) It is usually concerned with immediate and practical missions; (3) It usually occurs outside of schools, and any situation which affords appropriate experiences may be employed as the learning site; (4) Proof of knowledge is more likely to be by performance than by certificate; (5) It usually does not involve highly organized content, staff or structure; (6) It usually involves voluntary participation; (7) It usually is a part-time activity of participants; (8) Instruction is seldom graded and sequential; (9) It is usually less costly than

formal education; (10) It usually does not involve customary admission criteria; potential students are those who require the available learning or who are required by the situation to have it; (11) Selection of mentors is likely to be based more upon demonstrated ability than on credentials; and voluntary leaders are frequently involved; (12) It is not restricted to any particular organizational, curricular or personnel classification; and it has great promise for renewing and expanding any of them; and (13) It has potential for multiplier effects, economy and efficiency because of its openness to utilize appropriate personnel, media and other elements which may be available in a given situation without concern for externally imposed, often irrelevant and usually expensive criteria and restraints.

Values and Advantages of Nonformal Education

Nonformal education has its own values and advantages as pointed out by specialists in this field. Ward and Dettoni[10] noted that a primary value reflected in most nonformal education programs is on the immediate usefulness of education - - in terms of personal growth and occupational enhancement. Unlike in formal education where what is learned now in terms of knowledge and skills are mainly for future use, what one learns from nonformal education finds immediate application by the individual learners.

A second predominant value of nonformal education is person-centeredness. Since those who are engaged in nonformal education are usually keenly aware of the practical and immediately useful goals for their education experiences, they tend to center their instructional approach on the particular or categorical needs of their students. In other words, nonformal education is need-centered. The students learn only what they need and once they have it they leave the NFE class without much fanfare.

A third value element is that very often academic degrees or certificates are not required of the instructional staff. As often as not, the teachers are those who themselves have mastered the cognitive-affective-psycho-motor skills involved but do not have formal accreditation, in the sense that this concept is used in the area of formal education.

Nonformal education focuses on practical, functional, and often, work- and job-related education. While theory is important, theoretical discussions are taken only to extend or broaden the understanding of the students. More important are the practical knowledge and skills which are directly connected to, and are indispensable in the efficient performance of their particular work or job.

Looking at it particularly in the Philippine context nonformal education has multifarious values and advantages, some of which are the following:

1. Nonformal education is the only effective way, outside formal education, of providing literacy, numeracy and communication skills to the millions of Filipinos who are illiterate and semi-literate. A recent survey[11] conducted by the Office of Nonformal Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, showed that as of December 1980 there were more than 2 5 million people in the Philippines, 10 years old and over, who are illiterate and semi-literate.

2. Nonformal education is the only effective means of providing the 5 to 6 million out-of-school youth and adults with the necessary vocational and technical skills to enable them to participate in, and share the benefits of, the various economic activities available to them and thus attain a better and higher quality of life for themselves and their families.

3. Nonformal education is the only program that can offer opportunities for social, cultural and recreational development to all people who are unreached and unserved by the formal school system.

The values of nonformal education can also be appreciated by looking at what NFE can contribute to formal education. Nonformal education can contribute to formal education in the following ways:

1. As an alternative for formal education. In this sense NFE is a way of doing something that the formal education system can also do but don't do due to many reasons, e.g. lack of resources such as time, facilities, personnel, funds. Craftsmen can be trained in the formal school system as well as in a nonformal program. Agriculture can be taught in the formal school or through extension programs.

2. As a complement to formal education. Nonformal education can be an important additional component in the overall educational structure to make the formal school program more complete. It can be the on-the-job training that makes the theoretical

aspects of the formal school immediately applicable to daily life needs and requirements.

3. As an extension of the formal education system. This is particularly appropriate in the light of the emphasis on lifelong education which is an attempt to extend the learning process over the whole life span of the individual extending it beyond the formal school system in time and location. This can be done best through nonformal means.

4. As a part of a national learning system. The total needs of a nation and its people are served by a total learning system, of which formal and nonformal education are esential elements. No matter how nonformal education is characterized, it should be considered as a part of a total learning system, part of a complete set of activities the purpose of which is to carry out the educational functions of society.

Nonformal education cannot be considered as a monolithic phenomenon but is an indispensable, supportive part of a total continuing learning system. As Ahmed and Coombs noted:

> Nonformal and formal education ... are not competitors. They should be seen as mutually reinforcing partners. Both are essential, in many different forms, to flesh out a comprehensive and coherent "lifelong learning system" that can serve all members of a population in response to their diverse and changing needs.[12]

Summary

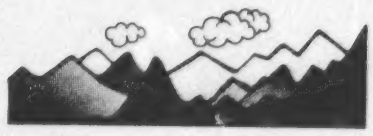
This chapter deals with the rationale, concepts, nature and scope, characteristics and values of nonformal education.

Nonformal education is a necessary component of a lifelong education system. What a person ought to know or the information, knowledge and skills he needs in a lifetime cannot be acquired through formal education alone. A great number of children, youths and adults do not have the opportunity to avail themselves of the benefits of formal schooling but, like every Filipino they, too, have a right to education.

Nonformal education is any systematically organized educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal school system to provide selected types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population.

Nonformal education has many distinguishing characteristics some of which are: (1) The program is for meeting the specific needs of a particular target group; (2) It is usually concerned with immediate and practical missions; (3) It usually occurs outside of school; learning takes place anywhere; (4) Proof of knowledge is performance and not certificates; (5) It is voluntary; (6) It does not involve highly organized content, staff and structure; (7) It is usually a part-time activity of the participants; (8) Instruction is seldom graded and sequential; (9) It is usually less costly than formal education; (10) It usually does not involve customary admission criteria; (11) Instructors are selected based on demonstrated ability and not on credentials; (12) It is for everybody; (13) It is very flexible and more susceptible to innovation; and (14) The administration is diffused; not the responsibility of any single agency.

Nonformal education has many values and advantages. It is an alternative for, a complement to, and an extension of the formal school system. It is an indispensable component of a national learning system. Nonformal and formal education are not competitors but are mutually reinforcing partners of a total learning system to serve all members of a population with diverse and changing needs.



Notes:

[1] Philip H. Coombs, *New Paths to Learning for Rural Children and Youth* (U.S.A.: International Council for Educational Development, 1973), pp.10-11.

[2] Manzoor Ahmed and Philip H. Coombs, editors, *Education for Rural Development* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), p.xxviii.

[3] Cole S. Brembeck and Timothy J. Thompson, *New Strategies for Educational Development* (Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1973), p.5.

[4] Office of Nonformal Education, *Nonformal Education: A Primer* (Manila: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1977), p.17.

[5] Ahmed and Coombs, op.cit., p.xxix.

[6] Brembeck and Thompson, op,cit., p.5.

[7] Russell J. Kleis, et. al., "Towards a Contextual Definition of Non-formal Education," *Program of Studies in Nonformal Education Discussion Papers No. 2* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1973), p.6.

[8] Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group, *New Strategies for Educational Development: Nonformal Alternatives* (Washington, D.C.: SEADAG, 1971).

[9] Kleis, et. al., op. cit., p.6.

[10] Ted Ward and John M. Dettoni, "Nonformal Education: Problems and Promises," *Program of Studies in Nonformal Education Discussion Papers Number 2* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1973), p.18.

[11] MEC Memorandum, No. 142, s. 1980.

[12] Ahmed and Coombs, op. cit., p.xxxi.